

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 20 is amended and claim 33 is cancelled in response to the Advisory Action dated May 31, 2007. Claims 31 and 35 are amended to be placed in a better form. It is believed that the present amendments do not raise new matter. Nor does the amendments raise a new issue or impose undue burden on the Examiner. Entry of the above amendments is respectfully requested. Upon entry of the present amendments, claims 20, 22-27, 30-31, and 34-35 are pending. Reconsideration of the present Office Action is respectfully requested.

Claims 20, 22-24, 26-27, and 33-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mizukami et al. (EP 0882983 A2) in view of Sosnowski et al. (WO 98/10273).

The claims have been amended to be directed to a composition comprising a polymethine dye; a nitrite reducer comprising urea, thiophenol, mercaptoethanol, sulfamic acid, or sulfurous acid; and a buffer for maintaining an acidic pH. As stated by the Examiner in the Office Action dated March 6, 2007 on page 2, such a composition is free of the prior art. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) of presently pending claims 20, 22-24, 26-27, and 34-35, as amended, be withdrawn.

We gratefully acknowledge the allowance of claims 30 and 31. Since claim 20, as amended, is free of the prior art, and therefor in a condition for allowance, the objection to claim 25, which depends from claim 20, should be withdrawn.

Based on the foregoing, Applicants believe that the present application is placed in condition of allowance. Early and favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

It is believed that no other fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application. However, if any fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

Respectfully submitted,
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Dated: July 2, 2007

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